

ASHINGTON
URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL.

ANNUAL REPORT

FOR 1914,

R. J. MILLS, M.B.,

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH.

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Sanitary Inspector's Report for the Year 1914.

To DR. R. J. MILLS,
Medical Officer of Health.

DEAR SIR,

I beg to submit my Annual Report as follows :—

NUISANCES, NOTICES, ETC.

67 complaints were received and investigated, 749 informal notices were given and 106 Statutory notices served in respect of nuisances under the Public Health Acts and Byelaws.

The number of Statutory notices not complied with at the close of the year was 74, or nearly 70% of the notices served.

Further details as to inspections, notices, and results of service of notices appears in the tabulated statements appended.

The following common nuisances deserve your attention, viz. :—

1. **Delapidated and Insanitary Privies and Middens.** At least 30% of the middens fall within this category, *e.g.* :—they are without roof or otherwise structurally defective, or without an impervious bottom, or have all these defects.

It has been noticed that since a number of these middens have been provided with concrete bottoms they are frequently in a very foul condition owing to the tenants throwing slops into them. Prior to being "bottomed" this condition was never recognised. Upwards of 5 cubic yards of foul earth has been removed from some of these middens below the scavenging level before concreting the bottoms.

The Council instituted legal proceedings against the owner of 8 such middens with the result that the necessary work was immediately executed, and, with the magistrates' permission, proceedings were withdrawn on payment of costs—£2 4 0.

30 houses were reported to have insufficient privy accommodation (Sec. 36, Public Health Act, 1875). Notices were served to convert the privies into water-closets at 17 of these houses, none of which have been complied with.

2. **The fouling of middens with water.** This nuisance, one of the vilest imaginable, appears to be on the increase, although every appeal has been made to householders (by posters and handbills) to cease such fouling.

The nuisance rarely recurs after those responsible have been warned individually.

Where middens have been continuously fouled the Council have decided to take legal proceedings against the occupiers.

3. **The keeping of Animals in close proximity to dwellings.** When it is kept in mind that most of our streets and yards are without paving, and therefore do not admit of thorough cleansing, it cannot be denied that the fouling of such ground in the immediate neighbourhood of dwellings is detrimental to the health of the inmates.

The nuisances from this source, though still very prevalent, are gradually being eliminated.

4. The want of yard paving. Very little progress is being made in removing this common defect.

Generally, it amounts to 30 square yards of soil which is frequently polluted and incapable of being cleansed. This is especially so with houses in flats.

Houses are frequently damp owing to this want of surface drainage.

5. The want of sufficient drainage for roof and surface water at the front of dwelling houses. None of the houses referred to in my last Report have been provided with the necessary drains for the effectual discharge of roof water from the front of the houses.

The Council, however, now propose to deal with some of these front streets under the Private Street Works Act, 1892. A suitable outfall will then be available.

6. Defective drains. The drains to houses built previous to the last 10 years or so are jointed with clay, or are without jointing material of any description.

During the relaying of such drains the soil in the immediate vicinity of the joints is often in a very foul condition from sewage pollution. Further, there is nothing to prevent such drains from acting as ventilators to the sewer.

Every effort is being made to have these drains relaid with cement joints, but progress is very slow. To be effective they must be dealt with systematically, street by street.

All new drains are now tested either with water or smoke machine.

7. Overcrowding. 18 instances were noted and reported upon, 6 of which were subsequently abated.

Two bad cases of space overcrowding were as follows. The house in each case was a two-roomed flat with nominally one bedroom.

CASE 1. 13 persons,
Mother.
Son and wife with 3 children under 4 years.
Son and wife with 4 children under 3 years.
Son.

CASE 2. 9 persons.
Father and mother.
Sons, 17 yrs. ; 14 yrs. ; 10 yrs. ; 7 yrs. ; 5 yrs. ; 9 mths.
Daughter, 15 years.

Most of the cases were of moral overcrowding, *e.g.* :—the intermixing of the opposite sexes above the age of puberty. This class of overcrowding is very common, especially in houses in flats, and is chiefly owing to the tenant letting rooms to another family.

There are, however, a number of instances where 4 roomed self-contained houses are let to two tenants. Access to the yard is obtained from the kitchen, through which the upstairs tenant carries her slops, water, coals, ashes, etc., with very disagreeable results to both tenants. The sanitary conveniences and cooking range are used in common by both tenants. With one tenant these houses are let at 7/- per week (clear). With two tenants the rent is 5/- per week each (clear).

INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

The systematic following up of all notified cases of infectious diseases has been attempted, but it has been found impossible to visit every case. In the cases visited, isolation of the patient was, in many instances, impracticable.

The premises whereon cases of enteric fever occurred were visited immediately after notification. In many cases insanitary conditions were recognised, but these were generally common to neighbouring houses. The removal of these defects—typified under Common Nuisances—to have beneficial results, suggests the necessity of urging on the work of house-to-house inspection, and continued effort to secure the necessary improvements.

Except in cases of enteric fever, which are all removed to the hospital, disinfection is only carried out in special circumstances or by request. The patients' room is fumigated with "Sulphume," and the bedding usually put through the Thresh disinfector at the Isolation Hospital.

HOUSING, TOWN PLANNING, ETC., ACT, 1909.

Under the provisions of the Act, 276 houses were inspected and full particulars recorded, as required by the Regulations made under Sec. 17.

Of the houses examined, 85 were semi-through houses, *e.g.*, flats on the first floor with only one external door, and this into the yard. These are of 2 or 3 rooms.

Rooms and Rental (clear).

Flats :	2 rooms—	4/- to 5/-
	3 "	3/6 to 5/-
Self-contained :	3 "	4/6 to 5/-
	4 "	5/- to 6/-
	5 "	6/6 to 7/-

47 of the houses inspected were "free" houses.

Common defects found in houses inspected. The principal defects found were nuisances in the surroundings of the houses. These are enumerated under Common Nuisances.

Other defects were, insufficient light and ventilation (attic bedrooms with skylight only), dampness from defective roofs, defective eaves gutters and downspouts, carked walls, and want of damp-proof courses, no pantry or coal place, and minor structural defects in floors, walls, windows, etc.

Only 7 of the 276 houses examined were provided with a slop sink with a water supply over it. The majority of the houses had their water supply in the back street. In my opinion this is a defect. Every house should be provided with reasonable facilities for the maintenance of cleanliness.

It should be mentioned that the tenants themselves are often responsible for many of the minor structural defects. Many of them show a complete apathy, even when a few coppers would put the matter right. This class of tenant rarely fails to point the neglect of the landlord. The best endeavours of landlords and of Health Authorities appear to be wasted on these irresponsibles with a consequence that is disheartening.

Improvements effected. I am glad to report that many improvements are being effected in some of the properties inspected. The National Crisis has no doubt interfered with further progress.

To give a few instances :—

Hawthorn Road, 46 houses (flats). Property being thoroughly repaired, drains relaid and intercepted, yards and middens concreted, etc.

Poplar Street, 56 houses (flats). Drains being relaid and intercepted, yards and middens concreted etc.

Rosalind Street, 6 houses (self-contained). Property thoroughly repaired, yards concreted etc. Substantial improvements have also been effected at a number of other properties in other parts of the District.

Houses unfit for human habitation. 47 houses inspected were considered unfit for human habitation. The rooms lack sufficient light and ventilation, the walls are damp, roofs defective etc., etc. Owing to the scarcity of houses it is almost impossible to deal with them in the manner required.

Closing orders were made in respect of two houses (flats) at 18 High Market, which were inspected during the year 1913. This building was formerly shop premises which was subsequently let in 3 flats for which it was not adapted.

Plans have since been submitted and approved by the Council for the conversion of the building into 4 flats. This work is now in progress.

SLAUGHTER-HOUSES AND FOOD INSPECTION.

12 Slaughter-houses were on the register at the close of the year, all subject to Annual Licence.

They are all in close proximity to dwellings and 10 of them are unsatisfactory owing to their situation and to structural defects.

Byelaws as to these premises are not yet in operation.

Meat was retailed at 29 shops. Of these, 7 chiefly sold meat (Colonial and English) slaughtered outside the District. 7 butchers living outside the District regularly retailed meat from carts in the District.

No unsound meat or other food was surrendered or seized during the year.

The prohibition of the inflation of carcasses and the sale of meat so inflated, and the fixing of a minimum weight for calves at slaughter are powers much to be desired.

A more thorough inspection of our food supply is necessary. The provision of a public abattoir would help in this direction and would also eliminate the unsatisfactory premises referred to.

No samples were taken under the Food and Drugs Acts.

OFFENSIVE TRADES.

The register contains the names of :—

- 15 Fish Fryers
- 1 Tripe Boiler.
- 1 Gut Scraper.

On 5 occasions it was found necessary to give notices to remove offensive accumulations of fish offal from friers' premises. It was also found necessary to send a circular letter to each frier regarding the indiscriminate deposit of fish offal in close proximity to dwellings in various parts of the District. The storage and daily removal of this refuse in closed galvanized iron receptacles is much needed.

The premises are generally kept fairly clean.

Adequate and permanent means of ventilation in some of the frying rooms is necessary.

In two instances insanitary privies and middens were abolished and replaced with waterclosets and ashbins, the drains being relaid and intercepted in each case.

Byelaws as to these premises are not yet in operation.

DAIRIES, COWSHEDS AND MILK-SHOPS

The register includes :—

1 Dairyman.	}	Residing within the District.
4 Cowkeepers and Purveyors,		
2 Cowkeepers only.		
35 Purveyors only.		
7 Purveyors residing outside the District.		

None of our milk is distributed in sealed bottles.

Dairy. A modern dairy has been built in which the milk is sterilized before distribution.

Cowsheds. There are 6 Cowsheds and approximately 60 cows kept within the District.

4 of these sheds are unsatisfactory owing to insufficient light and ventilation or other structural fault. It is probable that two of these sheds will be altered during the present year.

The sheds were generally found in a fairly clean condition and regularly limewashed

Milk-shops. The method of storing milk at these premises leaves much to be desired. It is generally kept in open vessels, and, in the case of General Dealers, in close association with many nauseous articles retailed by them.

FACTORIES AND WORKSHOPS.

A list of registered workshops with particulars of inspection etc., appears in the tabular statement appended.

There are also two domestic workshops on the list and both bakers.

One defect (no separate closet accommodation for the sexes) remains outstanding from the year 1912.

Two defects (want of closet accommodation) are outstanding from the year 1913.

Two defects from defective drains at factories have been remedied during the year.

The structural fitness and maintenance of 4 of our bakehouses is below the standard. The firing of the oven in the baking-room does not lend itself to the maintenance of the necessary standard of cleanliness required. On 4 occasions it was found necessary to speak to the occupiers regarding the dirty condition of their premises.

3 employers sent 1 list each of outworkers employed by them, 8 in all, 7 of whom were engaged in making underclothing, and 1 in alterations to men's clothing.

Enquiries were made at other drapers etc., without ascertaining the employment of further outworkers.

PUBLIC HALLS, ETC.

At the Miners' Theatre extensive sanitary improvements have been effected.

5 Social Clubs have been provided with modern ware urinals, waterclosets and ashbins ; suitable structural alteration being made and drains relaid and intercepted in each case.

The drains and sanitary conveniences to St. Aidan's School and Bothal National School were found unsatisfactory. The drains to the whole of St. Aidan's premises were subsequently relaid.

The want of sanitary conveniences for the artistes at the Pavilion Theatre was also reported upon.

The necessary sanitary improvements to the two halls referred to in my last Report, viz. : Hippodrome and Harmonic Hall, are now in progress.

The drains at the Ashington N.E.R. Station and sanitary conveniences to the cottages were also found defective. The necessary improvements are to be put in hand

FABRICS MISDESCRIPTION ACT.

No action has been taken under this Act.

OTHER DUTIES.

My duties in respect of the examination of drains to new houses, and the supervision of ashpit cleansing, were reported upon to the Surveyor monthly.

257 visits were made to examine the drains to 99 new houses. All new drains are now tested with water or smoke machine, with the result that there is a decided improvement, both in workmanship and materials.

The supervision of ashpit cleansing is practically a daily occupation.

I am, Sir,

Yours respectfully,

R. BROWN.

TABULAR STATEMENT (a).

Inspections.

Class of Premises.	Number of Visits or Inspections.
Slaughterhouses	183
Offensive Trades	68
Dairies, Cowsheds and Milkshops	56
Infectious Diseases	164
Factories and Workshops	72
Housing Act	420
Premises general <i>re</i> nuisances	1988
" " " works in progress	767
Drains to New Houses	257
Total ...	3975

SUBJECT OF NOTICE.

SUBJECT OF NOTICE.	Number of defects found.	Number of Informal notices.	Number of formal notices.	Number of formal notices complied with	Number of defects remedied.
Houses with insufficient sanitary accommodation ...	5*	1	0	0	4
" " structurally defective sanitary accommodation...	1626*	99	60	11	243
" " foul " "	332	338	2	2	318
" " insufficient drains	228*	0	0	0	46
" " defective "	155*	7	0	0	44
" " foul "	21	6	1	1	20
" " defective or no yard paving ...	390*	20	40	16	77
" " defective roofs	44	1	0	0	26
" " " eaves gutters and downspouts ...	129*	16	2	2	24
" " " floors	9*	1	0	0	3
" " " walls (plaster off, etc.) ...	41*	1	0	0	18
" " attic bedrooms with insufficient light and ventilation	18*	0	0	0	0
" " unsatisfactory or no pantry accommodation ...	19*	0	0	0	0
" " other structural defects	117*	0	0	0	35
" " overcrowded	18	12	0	0	6
Public Buildings, &c., with insufficient sanitary accommodation	2	2	0	0	0
" " " structurally defective sanitary accommodation	6	2	0	0	2
" " " " defective drains	8	1	0	0	3
Premises where animals kept so as to be a nuisance ...	13	13	0	0	6
Offensive accumulations	13	10	0	0	13
Miscellaneous Nuisances	6	4	0	0	6
Letters dealing generally with the defects marked * (informal and second notices)	3200	534	106	32	894
Total informal notices		749			

TABULAR STATEMENT (c),

Work executed as a result of the serving of notices.

	No.
Privies abolished and waterclosets provided in place thereof ...	38
New waterclosets provided	8
Watercloset combinations renewed	6
Watercloset cleansed	1
Middens abolished	18
Ashbins provided in place of above	21
New ashbins provided	3
Midden roofs repaired	17
Middens provided with roof and concrete bottoms	17
Midden bottoms concreted	50
New middens built	4
New privies built	14
Midden doors repaired or renewed	39
New drains laid	13
Drains relaid and intercepted... ..	52
Drains relaid	16
Drains repaired	7
Drains cleansed	19
Chambers to drains enlarged	6
Chambers to drains provided	3
Cesspools abolished	2
Houses provided with slop sinks and water supply	8
Houses provided with concrete margin to carry off surface water ...	46
Insanitary urinals abolished	6
Ranges of ware urinals provided in place of above	7
New urinals provided	2
Urinals repaired	2
Yards paved with concrete	80
Yard paving repaired	1
House roofs repaired	35
Eaves gutters and downspouts repaired	26
House floors repaired	3
Other structural repairs to houses	73
Offensive accumulations removed	13
Overcrowding abated	6
Premises cleared of animals kept so as to be a nuisance	6

MISCELLANEOUS.

Interviews with Owners, Agents or Occupiers re nuisances ...	257
References to Surveyor's Department	21

HOUSING (INSPECTION OF DISTRICT) REGULATIONS, 1910.

Tabular Statement as required by Article V.

SANITARY DISTRICT.	No. of dwelling houses inspected.	No. of dwelling houses which, on inspection, considered unfit for human habitation.	No. of representations made to local authority with a view to closing order being made.	CLOSING ORDERS.		No. of dwellings in which defects remedied without closing orders being made.	No. of dwellings put into fit state for human habitation after closing orders made.	GENERAL CHARACTER OF DEFECTS FOUND.	Under demolition orders.	Voluntarily demolished
				No of orders made.	No of houses vacated at end of each year in consequence.					
Parishes or Sub-districts.										
1. ASHINGTON ...	49	47	2*	2*	0	0	0	Lack of pantry and closet accommodation and drainage, insanitary privies and middens, defective house roofs, spouts, walls, floors, drains, unpaved yards, insufficient light & ventilation, overcrowding, etc, etc	0	1*
2. HIRST	227	0	0	0	0	23†	0		0	0
Total for whole district...	276	47	2	2	0	23	0		0	1

Notes.

* These figures refer to houses inspected during the year 1913.

† 10 of the houses inspected in 1914 had no serious defects (not included in this number)

Substantial improvements have also been executed at other houses as follows :—

YEAR OF INSPECTION.	Number of Houses		TOTAL
	ASHINGTON	HIRST	
1913	13	62	75
1914	2	106	108
Total	15	168	183

MEDICAL REPORT FOR 1914.

MR. CHAIRMAN AND COUNCILLORS,

I beg to submit my Report for 1914.

The population of the district for last year, 28,318. The increase on that for the present year is made up as follows :—

Population in District at June, 1913	...	28,318
Increase from new houses occupied		.
from June, 1913-14 ...	...	1,001
Increase of Births over Deaths		
from June, 1913-14 ...	...	635
		<u>29,954</u>

Population in Wards,

	ASHINGTON.	HIRST.
At June, 1913 ...	9,065	19,253
Increase by new houses		
occupied, June to June, 1913-14 ...	291	710
Increase of Births over Deaths, 1913-14	101	534
	<u>9,457</u>	<u>20,497</u>

Checking the above figures from June to June, 1913-14, by number of houses occupied the population is 29,876, and to end of year in corresponding tenancy, 30,189—therefore I have assumed for statistical purposes the following estimate at June, 1914 :—

District ...	30,000
Ashington ...	9,500
Hirst ...	20,500

I may mention here, though it does not affect my statistical tables for the year, that there has been a considerable depletion of our population during the latter 6 months on account of the war. These figures will have to be accounted for in next year's Report.

From our chief industry in the district we have given about 2,600 men to the army, that is from the Ashington Coal Coy., and altogether from the community we have sent away between 3,000 and 4,000 to join the ranks, which, though a patriotic response, is a heavy toll on a community depending on practically one industry, especially as a considerable proportion are householders.

DISTRICT.

Our Urban District at the institution of the present Council, covered on administrative area of 2,786,280 acres. By increments of extension, firstly, of 97,424 acres, and, secondly, of 165,000 acres, the total area is now 3,048,704 acres :—

Ashington Ward containing 2,384,771 acres, and Hirst Ward 663,933 acres.

The district is bounded on the north, east and west by agricultural land in the Morpeth Rural District, and on the south by the river Wansbeck.

There is but one staple industry in the district, namely, coal mining, at which the bulk of the population find employment. There is, however, a great and increasing number of persons employed in a growing population such as this, by private traders, by stores, and especially by the builders, to whose energy and enterprise a large amount of employment has been found necessary for the increasing demands of the district.

BIRTH RATE.

The total number of Births registered for this year is 1,067, as against 1,004 for 1913, an increase of 63. There were 528 males and 539 females.

The distribution in the district is :—

Ashington	...	199	Rate	...	20.94	Decrease of 39 on 1913.
Hirst	...	868	„	...	42.34	Increase of 102 „ „
District	...	1067	„	...	35.7	Increase of 63 „ „

Comparing these rates with the County and England and Wales, we still maintain the maximum for an Urban District.

County Rate	...	...	26.43
Urban Districts	...	...	28.28
Rural „	...	...	21.34
England and Wales	...	...	23.90
Ashington, 1913	...	...	36.0
„ 1914	...	...	35.7

There is a marked decrease in the Births for the Ashington Ward, both numerically and in proportion to the population.

The following tables show the respective distribution of Births in each Ward, in which I have included the illegitimate births for the year—36. There were 4 transferred births during the year, all illegitimate, making the total births 1,011.

The illegitimate birth rate per 1,000 population is	...	...	1.3
The illegitimate birth rate per 1,000 children born is	...	...	37.4

ASHINGTON URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL. BIRTHS, 1914.

Months.	Males.	Females.	Total.
January ...	50	40	90
February ...	39	40	79
March ...	35	57	92
April ...	38	41	79
May ...	43	44	87
June ...	61	49	110
July ...	36	53	89
August ...	41	44	85
September ...	57	40	97
October...	44	49	93
November ...	41	44	85
December ...	43	38	81
Total	528	539	1067

ASHINGTON URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL. DISTRIBUTION OF BIRTHS, 1914.

Months	Ashington	Hirst	Total	ILLEGITIMATES.				Total.
				Ashington		Hirst		
				Males	Fem's	Males	Fem's	
January ...	15	75	90	0	0	0	1	1
February ...	14	65	79	0	1	0	1	2
March ...	18	74	92	0	0	0	1	1
April ...	13	66	79	0	0	0	1	1
May ...	20	67	87	0	1	1	3	5
June ...	25	85	110	0	0	0	0	0
July ...	16	73	89	0	1	0	1	2
August ...	10	75	85	0	0	0	2	2
September ...	16	81	97	0	2	0	2	4
October...	20	73	93	0	0	1	4	5
November ...	12	73	85	1	1	2	3	7
December ...	20	61	81	2	0	2	2	6
Total ...	199	868	1067	3	6	6	21	36

38 inward transferred and 2 outward transferred.

DISTRIBUTION OF AGE MORTALITY. ASHINGTON, 1914.

Months.	Under 1 year.	1 to 5 years.	5 to 15 years.	15 to 25 years.	25 to 45 years.	45 to 65 years.	65 yrs. and Upds.	Total	Trans- fer Death.
January ...	1	0	0	0	2	1	4	8	1
February .	3	0	0	0	1	2	2	8	0
March ...	1	1	0	0	1	0	4	7	0
April ...	2	1	0	2	0	2	4	11	0
May ...	2	0	0	0	0	1	2	5	0
June ...	0	0	0	1	0	0	2	3	0
July ...	3	1	0	0	0	1	1	6	0
August ...	6	3	0	1	0	0	3	13	0
September	6	3	2	0	3	0	4	18	2
October ..	2	0	0	0	2	0	1	5	0
November	2	0	0	0	1	1	1	5	0
December	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	5	1
Total ...	28	9	3	5	11	9	29	94	4

DISTRIBUTION OF AGE MORTALITY. HIRST, 1914.

Months.	Under 1 year.	1 to 5 years.	5 to 15 years.	15 to 25 years.	25 to 45 years.	45 to 65 years.	65 yrs. and Upds.	Total	Trans- fer Death.
January ...	6	6	0	1	3	6	2	24	2
February .	8	2	1	2	1	8	4	26	1
March ...	14	0	0	1	4	3	1	23	3
April ...	8	3	0	0	2	3	2	18	3
May ...	3	2	0	0	4	3	4	16	4
June ...	4	0	2	1	2	1	1	11	2
July ...	4	4	4	1	4	6	2	25	2
August ...	11	2	1	1	3	3	4	25	3
September	32	7	1	2	4	3	4	53	5
October ..	19	3	0	0	3	5	2	32	4
November	11	8	1	2	3	2	3	30	2
December	9	5	1	2	6	2	0	28	3
Total ...	129	42	11	13	39	45	32	311	34

ASHINGTON URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL. CAUSES OF DEATH, 1914.

Causes of Death. 1	Deaths in or belonging Whole District at Sub-joined Ages									Total Deaths in Public Institutions in the District. 11	Ash.	Hirst
	All Ages. 2	Under 1 yr. 3	1 and und 2 4	2 and und 5 5	5 and und 15 6	15 and und 25 7	25 and und 45 8	45 and und 60 9	65 and upds. 10			
Enteric Fever ...	5	0	0	0	1	2	2	0	0	4	2	3
Small Pox ...	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Measles ...	8	1	3	3	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	8
Scarlet Fever ...	8	0	2	3	2	0	1	0	0	0	2	6
Whooping Cough ...	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Diphtheria and Croup ...	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Influenza ...	4	0	0	0	0	0	2	2	0	0	0	4
Erysipelas ...	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Cerebro-Spinal Fever ...	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other Septic Diseases ...	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
Convulsions ...	18	15	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	6	12
Heart Disease ...	33	0	0	1	2	0	8	11	11	0	10	23
Phthisis (Pulmonary Tuberculosis) ...	40	0	0	0	3	12	19	6	0	0	10	30
Tuberculous Meningitis ...	6	3	2	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	2	4
Other Tuber Diseases ...	5	0	0	0	0	1	4	0	0	0	0	5
Rheumatic Fever ...	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Cancer. Malignant disease ...	22	0	0	0	1	0	3	12	6	0	7	15
Bronchitis ...	25	7	2	0	0	0	4	5	7	0	4	21
Broncho-Pneumonia ...	26	17	6	2	0	0	0	0	1	0	2	24
Pneumonia (all other forms) ...	19	4	1	1	0	2	6	4	1	0	1	18
Other Diseases of Respiratory Organs ...	4	0	1	0	0	0	2	0	1	0	2	2
Diarrhoea and Enteritis ...	74	57	7	4	0	1	0	1	4	0	19	55
Appendicitis & Typhlitis ...	2	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	2
Alcoholism ...	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Cirrhosis of Liver ...	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0
Nephritis and Bright's Disease ...	12	1	0	2	0	0	2	3	4	0	4	8
Puerperal Fever ...	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other accidents and Di- seases of Pregnancy and Parturition ...	3	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
Congenital Debility and Malformation, includ- ing Premature birth ...	49	46	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	8	41
Violent Deaths, excluding Suicides ...	11	0	1	1	0	1	2	4	2	0	4	7
Suicides ...	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Serility ...	12	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	12	0	1	11
Apoplexy ...	18	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	13	0	5	13
Other Defined Diseases Meningitis, etc. ...	25	2	2	0	1	3	5	9	3	0	7	18
Diseases ill-defined or unknown ...	9	1	0	1	1	0	2	3	1	0	1	8
Total ...	443	158	34	18	15	23	63	65	67	4	98	345

It will be seen from the foregoing table that there is a marked increased mortality in two diseases, namely, Phthisis, which is responsible for 40 deaths as against 24 last year, and Diarrhoea disease claiming 74 deaths against 43 in 1913.

There are 5 deaths from Enteric, 4 in hospital and 1 transferred from outside district, the number notified being 24.

Only 8 deaths have occurred from Scarlet Fever out of 312 notifications.

An analysis of the foregoing shows the following :—

Deaths from Notifiable Diseases :—

Enteric Fever	...	...	5	Rate	...	0.16
Scarlet Fever	...	...	8	"	...	0.26
Diphtheria	...	...	1			
Erysipelas	...	...	1			
Phthisis	...	...	40	"	...	1.3
Other Tubercular diseases			11	"	...	0.36
			66			

From Infectious Diseases not notifiable :—

Whooping Cough	...	...	1			
Influenza	...	...	4	Rate	...	0.13
Measles	...	...	8	"	...	0.36
Infectious Diarrhoea	...	...	74	"	...	2.46
			87			

Respiratory Diseases :—

Bronchitis	...	...	25	Rate	...	0.83
Bronchi-Pneumonia	...	...	26	"	...	0.86
Pneumonia and other forms of Respiratory diseases...			23	"	...	0.76
			74			

INFANTILE MORTALITY DURING THE YEAR 1914.

Causes of Death.	Under 1 wk.	1-2 Weeks.	2-3 Weeks.	3-4 Weeks.	Total und. 1 month	1-3 Months.	3-6 Months.	6-9 Months.	9-12 Months.	Total Deaths under 1 year.
Small Pox	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Chicken Pox	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Measles	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
Scarlet Fever	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Diphtheria and Croup	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Whooping Cough	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Diarrhoea	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Enteritis	0	1	3	1	5	15	19	9	9	57
Tuberculous Meningitis	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	1	3
Adominal Tuberculosis	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other Tuber. Diseases	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Congenital Malformations	1	1	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	2
Premature Birth	11	1	0	1	13	2	1	0	1	17
Atrophy, Debility and Marasmus	6	2	1	0	9	0	7	2	2	25
Atelectasis	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Injury at Birth	3	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	3
Erysipelas	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
Syphilis	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
Rickets	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
Meningitis, not Tuberculous	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
Convulsions	3	2	1	1	7	2	3	2	1	15
Gastritis	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Laryngitis	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Bronchitis	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	2	3	7
Pneumonia (all forms)	0	0	0	9	0	2	4	9	6	21
Suffocation, overlying	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other Causes	0	1	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	3
Total	24	8	5	3	40	28	39	25	25	158

The total of Infant Mortality is 158, as against 151 last year, and for the increased population gives a decreased rate, namely, 5.2, as against 5.4 in 1913.

Infantile Mortality over district is 158, giving a rate of 5.2 against 5.4 in 1913.

"	"	in Ashington	28,	"	"	2.9	"	3.7	"	"
"	"	"	Hirst	129,	"	7.7	"	6.1	"	"
"	"	per 1,000 born.				Rate is 148	against	150.3	in 1913.	
"	"	"	"	"	Ashington	145	"	142.5	"	"
"	"	"	"	"	Hirst	148.6	"	152.7	"	"

It is worthy of note that although the number of Infantile deaths under 1 month is less than last year, namely, 40 as against 62 in 1913, the number of cases of Enteritis has increased from 2 to 5, and the number from the same cause under 1 year has increased from 23 to 57.

The number of Premature Births is only 17 this year as against 28 last year, whereas the number from Atrophy and Debility is the same, 25.

A comparison with the returns from the County for 10 years shows the following rate:—

County mean	...	...	...	127.00
Urban	"	...	...	134.95
Rural	"	...	...	108.26
England and Wales	...	...	...	119.4
Ashington, 1913	...	...	...	150.3
" 1914	...	...	...	148

The Births and Deaths show practically the same proportion as in previous years in relation to each Ward and the nature of its population, namely:—

Births in Ashington should be	...	337	in Hirst should be	...	729
are	...	199	are	...	868
		138 less.			139 more.
Deaths in Ashington should be	...	140	in Hirst should be	...	343
are	...	98	are	...	345
		42 less.			2 more.
Deaths under 1 year per children born					
Ashington should be	...	29	in Hirst should be	...	128
are	...	28	are	...	129
		1 less.			1 more.

CASES OF INFECTIOUS DISEASES NOTIFIED DURING 12 MONTHS ENDING 31st DECEMBER, 1914. ASHINGTON URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL.

Notifiable Diseases.	Cases Notifiable in Whole District.								Total Cases in each Locality.		Cases Removed to Hospital.	
	At Ages—Years.											
	At all Ages	Und. 1 year.	1 to 5	5 to 15	15 to 25	25 to 65	65 and upds.	Ash- ington	Hirst.	Ash- ington	Hirst.	
Diphtheria	48	1	9	31	4	3	0	9	39	0	0	
Scarlet Fever	312	4	93	204	9	2	0	83	229	0	0	
Erysipelas	28	2	1	1	5	18	1	7	21	0	0	
Enteric Fever	24	0	0	0	13	9	2	18	6	18	6	
Continued Fever	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Puerperal Fever	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	
Oph. Neon.	8	8	0	0	0	0	0	2	6	0	0	
Phthises	56	0	1	4	19	32	0	9	47	0	0	
Other Tuber.	29	3	6	11	4	5	0	5	24	0	0	
Total	506	18	110	251	52	70	3	134	372	18	6	

DISTRIBUTION OF INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

Months.	Diphtheria.		Scarlet Fever		Erysipelas		Enteric.		Puer. Fever.		Oph. Neon.		Phthisis.		Other Tuber		Total.		
	Ash- ington	Hirst	Ash- ington	Hirst	Ash- ington	Hirst	Ash- ington	Hirst	Ash- ington	Hirst	Ash- ington	Hirst	Ash- ington	Hirst	Ash- ington	Hirst	Ash	Hst	both
Jan.	2	9	7	47	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	7	0	0	11	65	76
Feb.	0	3	1	10	0	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	2	0	1	3	27	30
Mar.	0	2	6	7	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	9	11	20
April	0	3	11	26	2	2	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	3	1	2	15	37	52
May	0	0	17	23	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	5	1	4	18	35	63
June	1	0	8	11	2	5	0	0	0	0	1	2	3	3	0	2	15	23	38
July	0	1	6	27	0	3	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	3	0	3	7	38	45
Aug.	0	0	0	9	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	2	0	1	1	14	15
Sept.	2	1	4	12	0	0	8	1	0	0	1	0	0	4	1	3	16	21	37
Oct.	1	6	4	19	0	0	5	3	0	0	0	0	0	5	0	3	10	36	46
Nov.	0	8	7	15	0	3	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	9	2	4	12	39	51
Dec.	3	6	12	14	1	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	1	17	26	43
Total	9	39	83	229	7	21	18	6	1	0	2	6	9	47	5	24	134	372	506

Of this number notified, namely, 506 as against 573 last year, the decrease has been in the Ashington Ward, namely, 134 as against 199 in 1913.

The Attack rate per thousand population is:—

District	...	16.6	against 20.4 in 1913.
Ashington	...	14.1	" 22.1 "
Hirst	...	18.1	" 19.6 "

There has thus been a considerable reduction in the Attack rate over district, but chiefly in the Ashington Ward.

There were 312 cases of Scarlet Fever notified as against 380 last year, at which time the epidemic was very severe over the whole district as well as in the immediate neighbourhood.

A comparison with other districts in our neighbourhood shows the following in number and rate of Scarlet Fever Attack per thousand population for 1914.

	Cases.	Rate.
Ashington	...	309
Bedlington	...	113
Blyth	...	443
Cramlington	...	100
Earsdon	...	212
Newbiggin	...	5

The number of Phthisis Cases notified during the year is 56 as against 63 last year.

Out of the number of cases notified there were 17 deaths. There were also nine cases returned from Sanatoria during the same period.

Diphtheria Cases are less by 6 than in 1913, namely, 48 as against 54. The same precautions are still strictly adhered to, the use of Serum both for treatment and for prophylaxis, and systematic disinfection carried out in the houses.

Enteric Fever is the same as last year, 24, plus one outside case, and the number of deaths the same as last year, 5.

ASHINGTON URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL. HEALTH VISITOR'S REPORT.

No. of Birth Notifications received	...	...	...	...	889
Notifications from { Medical Practitioner	...	...	...	...	883
{ Midwife	...	...	...	...	40
{ Other Person (Father, etc.)	...	...	...	...	18
No. of Births not notified...	...	...	...	...	118
No. of Illegitimate Births	...	...	...	...	17
No. Stillborn	...	...	...	...	41
No. of Births supervised { First Visit	...	...	...	...	1135
{ Revisits	...	...	...	...	2445
No. of Infants wholly breast-fed	...	...	...	...	887
No. of Infants wholly hand-fed	...	...	...	...	88
No. of Infants partly hand-fed	...	...	...	...	30
No. of Deaths amongst Supervised Children { Legitimate	...	...	...	...	25
{ Illegitimate	...	...	...	...	22

From reading the foregoing report of the amount of work carried on by the District Health Visitors during the year, you will readily appreciate the magnitude of the labour.

I should recommend the Council in view of such to increase the subsidy to the Nursing Association in order to allow them to employ a whole time nurse for this object. I would also recommend that in the interests of this community that when the new General Hospital is opened there should be a clinic or consultation hours arranged, whereby expectant mothers could have advice by a trained maternity nurse, who might combine with her duties that of helping and superintending the Health Visiting.

The Infantile Mortality in our district does not decrease much in the first 4 weeks of life, and such deaths almost invariably point to prenatal causes, mostly preventable.

A glance at the Infantile Mortality table shows that, excluding Enteritis, one third of the causes of death are due to Debility, Convulsions from same, and from Premature Birth, and these deaths from our experience are in a greater number of cases preventable though attention to maternal health.

Our sympathies are mostly inversely to the square of the distance. I give you the figures of our Infantile Mortality and the appalling waste that such involves in a community that depends on its rising generation. A sudden epidemic in the same proportion would stagger your imagination, but because it is spread over a period the loss is only a table of figures.

The wastage of child life is still lamentably high. We do not compare unfavourably with other communities, but it cannot be denied that much is preventable, and that there is something wrong in the social condition that prevents the mother giving the attention required to ensure the virility of the next generation of workers.

As an Authority we must educate, and still further meet the needs of the heavy responsibility by organising both subsidised service and voluntary effort.

Throughout the year the district has been satisfactorily supplied with milk. There have been found no cases of illness especially in relation to Tubercle amongst the cows. There have been no deaths from Tubercular Enteritis amongst children, to which they are particularly susceptible if the milk were infected. There is a matter, however, which your Sanitary Inspector calls attention to in his report, namely, the undesirable retailing of milk in the ordinary general shop, of its insufficient protection from dust in the ordinary course of retail trade, and of the danger that this might be a cause of some of the diarrhoea diseases which were so prevalent in our district last summer. The same remark with a warning applies to the consumers who do not use the necessary precautions to prevent the access of dust to milk and foodstuffs in their homes. As I gave warning both in the press and by pamphlet, it is a neglect of cleanliness on the part of those responsible which is almost criminal not to take the precautions.

The dangers of dust containing all kinds of infectious material is a present one in all congested districts, and, though we are allowed an airspace that does not justify the term overcrowding, we still have the constant danger in our Township from the near proximity of privies and ashpits to the dwelling houses.

I have mentioned that there is no overcrowding as regards air-space per house per acre, but there is abundant evidence of domestic overcrowding. There is not sufficient air-space in rooms for a number of the occupants of houses, there is not enough of room accommodation in a number of cases to prevent overcrowding of sexes.

There are several reasons for this, the two chief being : (1) the early improvident marriage of the very young who have necessarily to take up house with the parents on one side or the other ; (2) the difficulty of finding housing, even for those prepared to furnish a comfortable home. It is a notorious fact to house-hunters that the demand for workmen's dwellings at a reasonable rental is far in excess of the supply.

Private enterprise for the past few years has been unable to cope with this essential need in our growing township, but that is no reason why what cannot be done by them should not be attempted on Municipal lines, and land purchased and houses erected by the Council to meet this ever pressing need.

In view of the possibilities of the greater development of our district, it must be permanently borne in mind that abatement of nuisances as a temporary expedient is a short-sighted policy, and that recommendations from the Sub-Sanitary Committee should be carried out in anticipation of future needs.

In the matter of individual paving of yards, roofing of ashpits, cementing floors, etc., it should be borne in mind that there is a greater need, namely, the abolition of the privies, and the institution of a water carriage system into our district.

The Water Supply for our growing population is not sufficient, as is evident from the comparative consumption of our district to similar towns, namely, 4 gallons per unit here to 15 and 20 elsewhere.

Now that there is a prospect of obtaining a water supply other than that from the pits, it is desirable that, compatible with the cost of same, provision should be made for a general W.C. system throughout the district, and an introduction of baths in houses where desired.

You will see on reading Mr. Brown's report that the amount of work entailed in Housing Inspection is enormous.

Very great credit is due to our Sanitary Inspector for the manner in which he has accomplished so much. As I have previously pointed out, I consider that further departmental assistance should be given, and along with an Assistant Housing Inspector, a Sub-Committee of the Council might voluntarily help in the work, as has been done by many District Authorities.

REQUIREMENTS.

EXTENSION OF HOSPITAL ACCOMMODATION.—The Hospital Committee have already chosen a site for extension of Hospital to accommodate Scarlet Fever.

SCAVENGING.—That the Council carry out the cleansing of ashpits by their own staff, as pointed out by your Surveyor and Sanitary Inspector. Although stipulated that covered vehicles be used in removing refuse, it is evident that only the letter of the contract is observed. Cleansing of ashpits during the day should also be prohibited.

In the meantime more accessibility and safe tipping accommodation should be assured.

That a refuse destructor may be provided that will ensure, if not a revenue, no loss in adoption.

SLAUGHTER-HOUSES.—The present system of allowing slaughtering in such proximity to the sale premises and dwelling houses is detrimental to Public Health, and a Public Abattoir is a necessity in the district.

DISINFECTING.—A new Disinfector is needed by Hospital.

I have to thank the Council for their co-operation in the various departments of Public Health Work during the year, and also to thank Mr. Marshall for the figures for the population estimate, and Mr. Brown, our Sanitary Inspector, for the very active and interested part he has taken in the Housing Inspection of the district, and Mr. Steel for some very interesting statistics in regard to the water supply, which will be available in your Surveyor's Report.

I am, Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,

R. J. MILLS.

APPENDIX No. 1.

Table showing relation between deaths from Diarrhoea (including Enteritis) and Infantile Mortality for the last 10 years.

	1905	1906	1907	1908	1909	1910	1911	1912	1913	1914
Diarrhoea deaths ...	22	30	5	37	19	28	64	5	28	74
Infantile mortality per 1000 births ...	175'2	188'6	146'7	202'7	132'9	163'7	212'7	101'2	150'3	148

Table showing number of deaths from Phthisis and death rate per 1,000 population for the last 10 years.

	1905	1906	1907	1908	1909	1910	1911	1912	1913	1914
No. of deaths from Phthisis ...	19	18	12	17	15	21	19	22	24	40
Rate per thousand of population ...	1'03	0'90	0'60	0'85	0'68	0'80	0'69	0'80	0'85	1'33

Table showing the number of cases, attack rate, number of deaths, and mortality rate from Enteric Fever for the last 10 years.

Enteric Fever.	1905	1906	1907	1908	1909	1910	1911	1912	1913	1914
No of cases ...	48	20	8	25	21	11	78	20	25	24
Cases per 1000 of population ...	2'62	1'04	0'40	1'25	0'95	0'47	3'18	0'74	0'89	0'80
No. of deaths ...	8	6	1	1	3	3	12	2	5	5
Mortality rate per 1000 of population	0'43	0'31	0'05	0'05	0'13	0'13	0'48	0'07	0'17	0'16
Mortality rate per 1000 cases ...	166	300	125	40	142	272	153	100	200	208

Table showing the number of cases, attack rate, number of deaths, and mortality rate from Scarlet Fever for the last 10 years.

Scarlet Fever.	1905	1906	1907	1908	1909	1910	1911	1912	1913	1914
No of cases ...	69	96	10	17	46	61	32	232	380	312
Cases per 1000 of population ...	3'77	5'00	0'50	0'80	2'08	2'65	1'30	8'59	13'57	10'40
No. of deaths ...	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	2	9	8
Mortality rate per 1000 of population	0'10	0'10	0	0	0	0	0	0'07	0'32	0'26
Mortality rate per 1000 cases ...	28	20	0	0	0	0	0	8	23	25

Table showing the number of cases, attack rate, number of deaths, and mortality rate from Diphtheria for the last 10 years.

Diphtheria.	1905	1906	1907	1908	1909	1910	1911	1912	1913	1914
No. of cases ...	27	45	60	41	39	15	16	19	54	48
Cases per 1000 of population ...	1'42	2'34	3'00	2'05	1'77	0'65	0'65	0'70	1'93	1'60
No. of deaths ...	6	7	5	6	5	2	2	3	10	1
Mortality rate per 1000 of population	0'32	0'36	0'25	0'30	0'22	0'08	0'08	0'11	0'35	0'03
Mortality rate per 1000 cases ...	222	155	83	146	128	133	125	157	185	20

Comparison between the deaths from Whooping Cough and Measles with the deaths from notifiable infectious diseases, other than Tuberculoses, for the last 10 years.

Year.	No. of deaths from Whooping Cough.	No. of deaths from Measles.	Total No. of Deaths from Whooping Cough and Measles.	Total No. of deaths from Notifiable Infectious Diseases.
1905	0	0	0	16
1906	5	9	14	17
1907	9	4	13	9
1908	9	0	9	12
1909	3	17	20	10
1910	17	0	17	6
1911	13	5	18	15
1912	2	14	16	9
1913	13	2	15	25
1314	1	8	9	15
Mean	72	59	131	134

Cases of Scarlet fever notified in 10 years, with rate per thousand population.

	Rate per 1000 Population.	Ashington.	Hirst.	Total.	Population.	Deaths.
1905	3.8	14	55	69	18,300	2
1906	5.05	31	65	96	19,200	2
1907	.5	2	8	10	20,000	0
1908	.8	1	16	17	20,000	0
1909	2.08	17	29	46	22,000	0
1910	2.5	11	50	61	24,000	0
1911	1.3	11	21	32	24,500	0
1912	8.5	119	113	232	27,000	2
1913	13.5	127	127	380	28,000	9
1914	10.6	83	229	312	30,000	8
Mean	4.8	416	839	1255		23 or 8.4 per 1000 notified.

As the population of Hirst is almost uniform with that of Ashington, the distribution per population is fairly equal.

Annual Report of the Medical Officer of Health for the year 1914, for the Urban District of Ashington on the administration of the Factory and Workshop Act, 1901, in connection with Factories, Workshops, Workplaces and Homework.

INSPECTION OF FACTORIES, WORKSHOPS AND WORKPLACES.

Including inspections made by Sanitary Inspector or Inspector of Nuisances.

Premises.	Number of		
	Inspections.	Written Notices.	Prosecutions.
Factories	15	1	0
Workshops	57	5	0
Total	72	6	0

DEFECTS FOUND IN FACTORIES, WORKSHOPS AND WORKPLACES.

Particulars.	Number of Defects.			Number of Prosecutions.
	Found.	R'medied	Refer'd to H.M. Inspector.	
Nuisances under Public Health Acts :—				
Want of Cleanliness	5	5	0	0
Other Nuisances	2	2	0	0
Sanitary accommodation { insufficient	0	1	0	0
{ not separate for sexes	1	0	0	0
Unsuitable or defective	1	0	0	0
Offences under the Factory and Workshop Act :—				
Breach of special sanitary requirements as to Bakehouses, Sec. 97-100	1	1	0	0
Total	10	9	0	0

REGISTERED WORKSHOPS.

Workshops on the Register at the end of the year.

	Number
Bakers (2 underground) ...	7
Blacksmiths	4
Bootmakers and Repairers	8
Cycle Repairers	5
Dressmakers and Milliners	14
Joiners and Undertakers	3
Picture Framer... ..	1
Plumbers	3
Polisher	1
Saddler	1
Stocking Knitter	1
Tailors	5
Underclothing	1
Watch Repairers	3
Wheelwrights and Coachbuilders	2
Total number of Workshops on Register ...	59

OTHER MATTERS.

CLASS (1)	Number (2)
Matters notified to H.M. Inspector of Factories :—	
Failure to affix Abstract of the Factory and Workshop Acts (s. 133, 1901) ...	3
Action taken in matters referred by H.M. Inspector { Notified by H.M. Inspector...	5
as remediable under the Public Health Acts, but { Reports (of action taken)	
not under the Factory and Workshop Acts (s.5, 1901) { sent to H.M. Inspector ...	2

